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Successful Initiatives for Trees: Tree Preservation in three Ontario communities

By Janet Anderson, LEAF volunteer

Oakville

The Oakville Oak has been saved. On December 21st, Halton Regional Council approved a resolution that will preserve the over 250-year-old White Oak Tree on Bronte Road.

The grand, old, white oak tree is located in the midst of where road widening is scheduled to occur. Community response to the potential removal of the tree led Halton staff to develop an option where the road construction could occur around the tree leaving it intact.

In July, Regional Council gave the community until December 15th to raise the \$343,000 necessary to accommodate the option for the road to go around the tree.

The Woodlands Oak Tree Preservation Committee – a citizen-led initiative – was formed. Through efforts such as selling books, a benefit concert and collecting community donations, the Committee was able to raise \$268,000. An agreement between Halton Region, the Town of Oakville and the Government of Ontario bridged the difference between the Committee's efforts and the goal of \$343,000.

Gary Carr, Halton Regional Council Chairperson, said "On behalf of Halton Regional Council I would like to commend the Woodlands Oak Tree Preservation Committee for their tremendous fundraising efforts. The committee's work to preserve this historic tree has raised awareness of the importance of our natural heritage."

Construction for the widening of Bronte Road is scheduled to begin in 2010.

Belleville

Belleville arborist Tom Mikel, with help from the Bell Creek Community Association, the Ontario Heritage Tree Alliance and the Ontario Urban Forest Council, recently saved a white oak from land developers.

The 1.5 m diameter tree took root in the east end of the city in about 1756. It was slated for removal when a developer's plan was unveiled adjacent to Bell Creek in the town of Belleville.

By talking with the developer in advance of the project, the Bell Creek Community Association was able to get the development plan changed so that the oak

will be in a public park and protected by fencing during construction to protect the root system.

Mikel plans to cultivate seedlings from its acorns and plant them in city parks hoping to take advantage of the tree's hardy genetics.

"The committee's work to preserve this historic tree has raised awareness of the importance of our natural heritage."

Nobleton

In early November 2006, Toronto & Region Conservation in partnership with the Trees Ontario Foundation, the Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust, the Township of King and the City of Toronto, assumed ownership of 69 hectares on the northern edge of Nobleton, ON. The action effectively protects this land from development.

The Conservation Authority will restore the area to its natural state starting early in 2007 with the Trees Ontario Foundation helping to fund the planting efforts.

"I speak for the trees, for the trees have no tongues."

-Dr. Seuss

OAKVILLE PRESENTS FORESTRY STUDY REPORT First of its kind in Ontario

**Trees outstrip
most people
in the extent
and depth of
their work for
the public
good.**

**-Sara Ebenreck,
American Forests**

On October 23, Oakville Town Council approved a Forestry staff report, "Oakville's Urban Forest: Our Solution to Our Pollution", on the Urban Forest Effects Model (UFORE) that uses various data to quantify urban forest structure and numerous urban forest effects across the municipality.

"This Report is great news for the Town of Oakville," said Chris Mark, Director, Parks and Open Space. "The Town can use this new information to help craft effective programs and policies that will sustain tree cover in the Town for generations to come."

Over the summer of 2005, approximately 500 residents and businesses participated in the Town's UFORE project. Using standardized field data from 372 randomly located plots, as well as local meteorological and air pollution data, numerous attributes about Oakville's urban forest were calculated.

Some of the major findings about Oakville's urban forest include:

- * There are 1.9 million trees (43 per cent are owned by the Town); the top three species by leaf area are sugar maple, Norway maple and silver maple.

- * The urban forest canopy cover is 29.1 per cent.

- * The replacement value of Oakville's urban forest is \$878 million and the value of the annual ecological services it provides is \$2.1 million.

- * The amount of air pollution filtered by Oakville's urban forest is equivalent to all (102 per cent) of the industrial and commercial emissions of course particulate matter (PM10) and 15 per cent of fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and over two times (243 per cent) the amount of sulphur dioxide plus other "criteria pollutants."

- * In 2005, 172 tonnes of "criteria pollutants" were filtered from Oakville's air, plus 22,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide.

- * Oakville residents and businesses save \$840,000 in annual energy bills due to trees' ability to reduce building energy costs.

"It's a fact: trees filter air pollutants and contribute to our overall health. This was the inspiration for the title of the Town's UFORE Report - Our Solution to Our Pollution," said John McNeil, Manager Forestry and Cemetery Services. "The Town's urban forest plays a role in reducing the risks to the health of Oakville residents by reducing the amount of smog formed from the local emissions of criteria pollutants."

For a copy of the UFORE Report and a PowerPoint presentation visit www.oakville.ca/forestry.htm

Take Action: Protect trees during construction

From the International Society of Arboriculture's brochure "Avoiding Tree Damage During Construction"

Construction can be deadly to nearby trees. Because our ability to repair construction damage to trees is limited, it is vital that trees be protected from injury. It is possible to preserve trees on building sites if the right measures are taken.

Get advice

Hire a professional arborist in the early planning stage. Allow the arborist to meet with you and your building contractor. Your arborist can assess the trees on your property and suggest measures to preserve and protect them.

Plan before construction begins

Your arborist and builder should work together in planning the construction. The builder may need to be educated regarding the value of the trees on your property and the importance of saving them. Sometimes small changes in the placement or design of your house can make a great difference in whether a critical tree will survive.

Erect barriers

Protective fences should be erected as far out from the trunks as possible in order to protect the root system. Instruct construction personnel to keep the fenced area clear of building materials, waste, and excess soil. No digging, trenching, or other soil disturbance should be allowed in the fenced area.

Get it in writing

All of the measures intended to protect your trees must be written into the construction specifications. The written specifications should detail exactly what can and cannot be done to and around the trees.

Post-Construction Tree Maintenance

Your trees will require several years to adjust to the injury and environmental changes that occur during construction. Stressed trees are more prone to health problems such as disease and insect infestations. Talk to your arborist about continued maintenance for your trees.

To view the full brochure, visit www.treesaregood.com. Also consult your local municipality for bylaws and policies for protecting private and public trees during construction.

Featured Resource: The Politics of Trees

www.na.fs.fed.us/SPFO/pubs/uf/techguide/politics.htm

Successful urban forestry programs have something in common. They exercise the political process to attain their goals. Time and again it has been proven that without political involvement, it is unlikely tree programs will receive the support they need. Most policy decisions are made at public meetings, and a good showing of support is critical to achieving a favorable outcome.

Remember that maintaining and preserving the urban forest for future generations is a big job and is more than one person can do alone. Success will require cooperation and coordination among many people. The more people involved the more successful the effort will be. Get political to make a difference!

Dendro Devotion

By Marc Willoughby, M.L.Arch.,
O.A.L.A., I.S.A. Certified Arborist

Match the disease or pest with the approximate location and year of discovery in North America. Source: Blouin, G. (2001) "An Eclectic Guide to Trees East of the Rockies"

Pest or Disease

- 1) Asian long-horned beetle
- 2) Gypsy moth
- 3) Japanese beetle
- 4) Beech scale
- 5) Birch leaf miner
- 6) Beech bark disease
- 7) Chestnut blight
- 8) White pine blister rust
- 9) Dutch elm disease
- 10) Elm bark beetle

Discovered in

- a) Halifax, 1890
- b) New York, 1900
- c) Massachusetts, 1869
- d) 1920's
- e) 1904
- f) New York City/Chicago, late 1990's
- g) Ohio, 1930
- h) Connecticut, 1923
- j) New Jersey, 1916
- k) Eastern seaboard, 1906

Science Bite: Emerald Ash Borer Continues Invasion in Ontario

The highly destructive Emerald Ash Borer has reached Essex and Lambton counties and in the municipality of Chatham-Kent. The beetle which destroys ash trees and has no natural predators on this continent was first discovered in the Windsor region in 2002.

A quarantine has now been implemented in these new areas. Movement of regulated materials including nursery stock, trees, logs, wood and packaging from all tree species is forbidden.

Scientists predict infestations in the Rainy River and Fort Frances areas of Northwestern Ontario with no expectation of managing the beetle. The goal now is to slow the spread.

Ontario researchers have discovered some native squirrels and parasitic wasps are developing a taste for the Borer. Woodpeckers love eating the bug but like the squirrels and the wasps, help to locate areas of infestation rather than being viable control agents.

North American scientists feel they are years away from endorsing an operable means of control and are watching for the first tree to survive the beetle's attack so that seed stock can be studied to determine why it survived. They are also scouring Asia for a natural predator and although have cited a few candidates, it will be years again before one species will be selected and longer still until safe release data is established and confirmed.

For more information on the EAB and CFIA's control efforts, visit: www.inspection.gc.ca/english/plaveg/pestrava/agrpla/agrplae.shtml

Mother Nature Takes Toll on Vancouver's Urban Forest

In mid-December a devastating windstorm downed and damaged thousands of trees and ravaged trails, seawall and structures in carving a path through Vancouver's Stanley Park, the largest city owned park in Canada and third largest in North America. This urban forest has a more natural character than most other parks including many huge Douglas fir, Western Red Cedar, Western hemlock and Sitka Spruce trees. A landmark specimen now known as the Hollow Tree is a 700 – 800 year old stump that attracts viewers and is arguably the most photographed park element. No longer alive, the stump has shrunk over the years from a circumference of 18.3 m many decades ago to a more recent 17.1 m.

The Vancouver Park Board was able to provide public access throughout most of Stanley Park as of the new year. Park board chair Ian Robertson, with the city's full support as pledged by Mayor Sam Sullivan, announced the creation of a team dedicated to restoring the park. Mayor Sullivan is actively seeking special funding from both provincial and federal governments acknowledging the collaborative effort needed among all levels of government for the park to successfully recover from the damage of the windstorm's 115 kilometer per hour winds.

Those individuals and corporations who want to help can send donations to the Stanley Park Tree Fund. For additional details, visit <http://vancouver.ca/parks/index.htm>

Events and Announcements

Green Toronto Awards

Deadline for nominations February 16, 2007

Nominations are now open for the annual Green Toronto awards. For information about the awards or to nominate an individual, company or organization, visit

www.toronto.ca/greentorontoawards.

The winners receive a \$5000 contribution to the environmental organization of their choice and a profile in the Toronto media to acknowledge those who are civic-minded and environmentally conscious and to inspire others.

"Cloth That Grows On Trees" Exhibit

Runs until April 15, 2007

Textile Museum of Canada
55 Centre Ave, Toronto

In tropical regions around the equator, people make clothes and ceremonial textiles from tree-bark, ingeniously pounded and stretched into thin, flexible sheets. Cloth like this is not woven on looms - it's the Cloth That Grows on Trees.

www.textilemuseum.ca

Oak Ridges Moraine Symposium

February 12-13, 2007

Radisson Hotel Toronto-Markham
50 East Valhalla Drive, Markham

The theme of the event is Land, Water and Community Well-Being. Participants will work together in preparing a public report on the progress made and the challenges that remain in protecting The Moraine. For more information, visit

<http://www.ormf.com/symposium/>.

8th Annual Stewardship Forum

Saturday, February 17, 2007

Kortright Centre for Conservation
9550 Pine Valley Drive, Woodbridge

This year's theme is Back to Basics: Stewardship 101. Everyone is welcome for hands-on workshops, lectures and tours that will help you build your stewardship toolbox. Free. Bus transportation will be made available from Downsview Station to KCC. Presented by the City of Toronto and the TRCA. More information is available by calling the Natural Environment hotline at 416-392-5323.

Get the Jump on Spring

Saturday, February 17, 2007

10 am - 4 pm

Toronto Botanical Garden
777 Lawrence Avenue East, Toronto

Toronto Botanical Garden's annual horticultural open house will showcase horticultural societies, garden clubs, environmental organizations, nurseries, and garden stores from all over Ontario. For details, visit

www.torontobotanicalgarden.ca

Shades of Green: Exploring Biodiversity, Human Values and Urban Planning

Thursday, March 8, 2007

Royal Botanical Garden Centre
680 Plains Road West, Burlington

A special joint symposium of the University of Guelph and the Royal Botanical Gardens on the importance of green space, nature and plant diversity for the human experience. For more information and to register, visit

www.rbg.ca/greenspace.

Get Involved with the UFN!

We want to hear from you! Email your stories, suggestions, announcements, photos, and ideas to info@leafforonto.org

Dendro Devotion Answers:
1) f 2)c 3)j 4)a 5)h 6)d 7)k 8)b 9)g 10)e